



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Little Bighorn Battlefield  
National Monument  
756 Battlefield Tour Rd  
Crow Agency, MT 59022  
406-638-2621 phone  
[www.nps.gov/libi](http://www.nps.gov/libi)  
[www.facebook.com/npslibi](https://www.facebook.com/npslibi)

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# Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument

## News Release

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### **LITTLE BIGHORN BATTLEFIELD ANNOUNCES COLLABORATIVE PROGRAM WITH THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

This summer, Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument will be one of the first National Park Service sites to participate in a new program of The National Trust for Historic Preservation. The Hands-On Preservation Experience, or HOPE Crew, will introduce young people and military veterans to historic preservation trade skills in order to foster a new generation of craftspeople in this type of resource management work. For this project, the HOPE Crew will utilize Montana Conservation Corps members to conduct crucial preservation activities. The National Park Service's Historic Preservation Training Center and park staff will provide preservation training and project oversight for the crew.

Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument preserves the site of the Battle of the Little Bighorn, fought 25-26 June 1876 between 12 companies of the 7<sup>th</sup> U.S. Cavalry and allied Lakota, Dakota, Nakota, Cheyenne and Arapaho forces. The defeat of the 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry and loss of 269 servicemen on the battlefield led to the creation of Custer National Cemetery in 1886. Since then, over 5,000 U.S. service men and women have found their final resting place on this hallowed ground. The HOPE Crew will conduct preservation and stabilization activities on the park's five monuments, and on headstones located within Custer National Cemetery.

Nationally significant memorials such as the Fort Keogh and Bear Paw Monument, Fort C.F. Smith, 7th Cavalry Monument, and others will receive substantial cleaning. The monuments will also receive critical stabilization and repair work to address weathering caused by exposure to environmental conditions. The program will also begin a systematic headstone cleaning and alignment program within Custer National Cemetery.

The HOPE Crew will begin to address these deficiencies this summer, and will also work with park staff to standardize procedures and skills to guide similar work in the future. Four journeyman level artisans from the Historic Preservation Training Center will also participate. Montana Conservation Corps members involved in the HOPE Crew project are young adults ages 18-25 and Armed Forces Veterans completing an AmeriCorps term of service. The project is scheduled to take four weeks from mid-July to mid-August. For further information, please contact Chief of Resource Management Chris Ziegler at (406) 638-3221, or email [Christopher.Ziegler@NPS.gov](mailto:Christopher.Ziegler@NPS.gov).

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